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THE OPHTHALMIC YEAR BOOK.

A Year Book attempts to acquaint its readers with the current publications of the world which bear upon its subject. Theoretically such a publication should be very popular. The members of a learned profession ought to be interested in the new discoveries, the latest thought and study bearing upon the problems with which they are constantly dealing. We should expect that the best and most important papers in the world's literature, sifted, translated and condensed, to make them most accessible, would appeal strongly to the busy doctor. To have the valuable portions of great medical libraries brought to him in one or a few volumes should seem a boon to the isolated practitioner.

But the fact seems to be that such volumes never have achieved popular success. The most successful of them, the German "Jahresberichten," have always had a relatively small circulation at a correspondingly high price. Nagel's Jahresbericht, which has now reached its forty-first year, costs between eight and nine dollars, unbound and without illustrations. In America, within the last generation, Sajous' Annual, of the Universal Medical Series, and Saunders' Year Book of Medicine and Surgery, both well started and energetically pushed, have suspended publication for lack of support.

The Ophthalmic Year Book has, in part, repeated the experiences of similar publications in other fields of medicine. It has met with the highest appreciation, freely expressed by the editors of ophthalmic journals, and others whose broad acquaintance with the field of ophthalmic literature makes their good opinion most significant. The value set upon it by leaders in the literature of ophthalmology makes possible its continuance with a small circle of subscribers, at an increased price, which they would pay rather than be without it.

But the Year Book was started with the hope that the valuable contributions to the world's literature might be brought within the reach of a larger proportion of English-speaking ophthalmologists, who could not command the resources of large medical libraries, or who could not read other languages. It has, so far, failed to accomplish this, to any degree commensurate with the enormous labor involved in its preparation.

On this account no volume of the Ophthalmic Year Book will be published this year. The purpose is not abandoned, but its ultimate accomplishment may be brought nearer by this suspension. In the first place it may be taken as an invitation to others to start such a publication. It leaves the field open. Possibly some individual or educational institution could occupy it more successfully. Certain it is that some association of ophthalmologists might do so. There are five such organizations among English-speaking ophthalmologists; either one of which could undertake such a publication, and give it from the start a wider reading and usefulness than has been attained in eight years under present management. One of these could more than double, in its own membership, the highest circulation reached by the Ophthalmic Year Book.

Again it is possible that a volume like the Year Book, published at longer intervals, each issue covering a period of two, or three, or more years, might be more popular with those who have not learned to think it so important to spend money for the literature of their profession, as to contribute to the church, or for the motor club, or to

attend a college or society dinner.

Finally this suspension of the Year Book leaves the writer more free to urge the value and importance of such a publication; and this may do more good than the same effort devoted to the preparation of an additional volume, such as that brought out a few months since. Every one who has found the Year Book of value to himself is invited to join in the effort to extend the appreciation of such a publication among his confreres, to the end that something of the kind may be established upon a permanent basis.

EDWARD JACKSON.

ABSTRACTS.

In publishing abstracts Ophthalmic Literature may seem to invade the province of other ophthalmic journals. But it does so only so far as this field remains unoccupied. There will be no duplication. We shall only publish abstracts of articles that have not appeared in any journal published in English within a reasonable time, say, one year, after their appearance in the original form in some other language. We shall only attempt to notice in this way articles of such importance that it seems a serious omission not to have them available in English.

REPEATED TITLES.

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Abstracts From Foreign Journals

Bietti, A. Passage into the Circulation of Bacillus Subtilis Inoculated into an Eye; as related to Hematogenous Theory of Sympathetic Ophthalmia. Annali di Ottalmologia, vol. xxxix, page 833. The author's experiments on rabbits lead him to the following conclusions: (1) After introducing the spores of the bacillus directly into the eye with the cutting edge, or by means of a splinter of copper left in the globe, it was in no case possible to demonstrate the presence of the organism in the blood, in the internal organs, or in the uveal tract of the other eye, although it was possible to isolate it from the inoculated eye. (2) After inoculating the eye with an emulsion of spores which, while not very dense, yet contained a large quantity of infecting material, he succeeded twice in isolating the bacillus subtilis from the liver, but not from the uveal tract of the other eye. (3) After inoculating with a very dense emulsion of spores (as Römer had done), the bacillus was found in the uveal tract of the other eye. (4) In one animal out of thirty-five inoculated with a dense emulsion and then kept under observation, he found in the second eye an iritis caused by the inoculated organism. He does not consider this as in the nature of a sympathetic ophthalmia, but merely as a case of metastasis, occurring exceptionally, after the introduction of an enormous quantity of germs into the first eye, and therefore under circumstances which could not possibly present themselves in clinical cases.

Zeeman, W. P. C., Lens Measurements and Emmetropisation.

(Graefe's Archiv., vol. 78, part 1, p. 93).

This paper in optical mathematics aims to extend our knowledge of the way in which emmetropia develops in the human eye. It follows the line of Straub's work on the same subject. Seventy-five persons of ages varying between 12 and 30 years were examined. In most cases the pupils were dilated with cocaine or with a 1-1000 solution of homatropin, to facilitate lens measurements. The ophthalmometer and Tscherning's ophthalmophakometer were used.

The measurements and calculations indicate that: (1) differences in the angle alpha in varying refraction are caused by differences in the length of the optic axis; (2) such differences in persons of equal refraction are the direct expression of differences in the distance of the fovea from the optic axis; (3) the distance of the fovea from the optic axis has no relation to refraction; and (4) relations between angle alpha and the degree of refractive anomaly could not be demon-

strated.

The average radius of corneal curvature in myopes was somewhat less, but that of hyperopes somewhat greater, than that of emmetropes. The average depth of the anterior chamber, and the radius of the anterior surface of the lens, as well as that of the posterior surface, were greatest in myopes and least in hyperopes; while the thickness of the lens was greatest in hyperopes and least in myopes. Thus, it appears that the differences in corneal curvature are such as to increase errors of refraction, but the variations in the other dimensions tend to a reduction of such errors. The author's measurements also indicate that the refraction of the lens is in hyperopes greater, and in myopes less than in emmetropes. So that the greater the demands made by the optical effect of the other media of the eye, the greater is the refractive strength of the lens. In other words, there exists an "effort toward emmetropia."

Rönne, Henning, Etiology and Pathogenesis of Secondary Diver-

gent Strabismus. (Graefe's Archiv., vol. 78, part 1, p. 49).

The material from which the author works is a total of 3,865 operations for comitant convergent squint, and 673 for comitant divergent

squint, done in Bjerrum's Copenhagen clinic between 1870 and 1909; and also eleven and 211 operations, respectively, for secondary convergent and divergent strabismus falling within the same period. The figures for each decade show about half as great a proportion of cases of secondary divergence after single as after double tenotomy for convergent squint. A series of ninety-two operations of advancement combined with tenotomy does not indicate any greater risk of secondary divergence after the use of this method. Monolateral squint, and the poor central visual acuity which commonly accompanies it, do not appear to predispose to secondary divergence. The same is to be said of periodic squint. The refractive condition at the time of the primary operation does not influence the development of divergence at a later date. There is no greater tendency to secondary squint in cases operated upon between the ages of 2 and 6 years than in older patients: if any distinction is to be made it is in favor of the early age. There does not seem to be any connection between the amount of primary squint and the tendency to secondary divergence. As regards the bearing of the amount of correction obtained at the time of operation the data are inadequate.

The pathogenesis of secondary squint is considered mainly under the heads of (1) operative insufficiency (defective reattachment of the tenotomized muscle); (2) overdosage (from faulty calculation or from abnormally high tension in the antagonist), and (3) spontaneous cure of the original anomaly (rendering the operative effect redundant). Since spontaneous cure is more likely to occur in early life, but, on the other hand, a relatively small proportion of cases of secondary squint arise between the ages of 2 and 6 years, this process does not influence the development of secondary divergence. As regards insufficiency and overdosage the figures are inconclusive. The author states, however, that while he finds no facts which clearly point to a predominating influence of the result by overdosage at the time of operation, he does find a number of circumstances suggesting that considerable rôle is played by operative insufficiency due to faulty healing.

The author expresses himself in favor of early operation, especially in view of the lay tendency to procrastinate fatally in the treatment of squint. Consideration of possible secondary divergence should have no decisive bearing on a choice between tenotomy and advancement.